his teens when the death of his grandfather placed him on the throne, Chu Yiin-wen soon found himself in an impossible situation. He antagonized his uncles, including Chu Ti, the fourth son of Hung Wu. Chu Ti had been given by his father the control of a large district in the Northeast and came to be known as Prince of Yen. A man of marked energy and ability, he speedily found occasion to raise the standard of revolt. However, the young Emperor had many loyal supporters who fought valiantly for him, and it was not until 1403 that Chu Ti, after a war which laid waste much of the territory on the plain between the Yellow River and the Yangtze, succeeded in taking Nanking. In the fall of his capital Chu Yiin-wen disappeared, and it is often asserted that he was not killed but escaped in the garb of a Buddhist monk, lived in hiding in a monastery, and had his identity disclosed many years later. Whatever his fate, he had permanently lost the Empire.

Chu Ti, in spite of the disloyalty and slaughter by which he had made his way to supreme power, proved an able monarch. While more correctly called by his dynastic title, Ch'eng Tsu, he is best known to us by the name of his reign period, Yung Lo (1403-1424). Under him the Ming dynasty reached the apex of its power. He vigorously maintained and extended Chinese prestige abroad and gave the Empire an energetic domestic administration.

In his foreign policy, Yung Lo was aggressive. He interfered actively in Mongolia, waging several campaigns there. He welcomed diplomatic relations with Yoshimitsu, the Shogun who controlled most of Japan. Yoshimitsu was eager for

friendly intercourse with China, partly because it would further trade, and partly because the Zen (Ch'an) monks who were influential at his court desired it. Yoshimitsu promised to restrain the Japanese pirates who troubled the coasts of China and even acknowledged the Ming Emperor as his suzerain. In Annam Yung Lo took advantage of internal dissensions to occupy much of the land and to divide it into Chinese administrative districts. Under him the petty chiefs of Upper Burma acquiesced more or less in Chinese authority.

Yung Lo sent several naval expeditions to the lands to the south. These visited Cochin-China, Java, Sumatra, Cambodia,